

The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the agency's highest recognition given to employers who offer exceptional support to their workers who serve in the National Guard or Army Reserve. This award is an incredibly prestigious honor, as only 30 businesses were selected as finalists this year from more than 2,400 potential candidates.

Mr. Speaker, it is a true privilege to represent the Southwest Missourians at Benjamin Franklin Plumbing, who have earned this nomination for respecting our troops. I'm proud to be a part of this community, where businesses like this have taken it upon themselves to act as patriotic role-models and I urge my colleagues to join me in applauding their being named a finalist for this esteemed award.

IN RECOGNITION OF OCA'S SACRAMENTO DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL 21ST ANNIVERSARY GALA

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 16, 2016

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Organization of Chinese Americans' Sacramento chapter and the distinguished organizations that are being honored at the 21st annual Dragon Boat Festival and Gala. I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring OCA Sacramento and these fine organizations.

The OCA Sacramento chapter is an active advocate for all Asian Pacific Islander Americans, dedicated to advancing the social, political, and economic well-being of our Sacramento community. An exemplary organization, OCA Sacramento promotes civic participation and community involvement. OCA Sacramento hosts a variety of annual events celebrating traditional Chinese holidays and festivals, such as the Dragon Boat Festival, which promote and foster an understanding of our city's rich cultural heritage. OCA Sacramento offers essay contests and scholarships for youth, which promote education and leadership skills. OCA Sacramento's deep involvement and commitment to our community is commendable.

In keeping with this year's theme of "Light the Torch for the Next Generation," receiving this year's Community Partner Award at the Festival are Wells Fargo, the Sacramento Police Department, and the Sacramento Sheriff's Department. These community organizations are dedicated to making the Sacramento region a safe and prosperous place to live, work, and raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, as the members of OCA Sacramento gather at the Dragon Boat Festival to celebrate their 21st anniversary, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring them for their unwavering commitment to the Sacramento region.

IMPROVING TREATMENT FOR
PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM
WOMEN ACT OF 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's comments on this legislation, and I'm encouraged by the bipartisan support to advance not only my bill, but all of the important bills we are discussing today.

I'd like to take a few minutes to discuss some of the stories of those who have faced addiction. Stories from people in my home state of New Mexico—who have faced the challenges of substance abuse and are healthier today and working to improve their communities.

As we come here and discuss the importance of various programs and we debate the need for greater investments—which I think we need to address this crisis—let us not lose sight of the people whose lives are at the center of this.

Mr. Speaker, sons and daughters, husbands and wives, friends and neighbors—everyone is impacted by this drug crisis.

I'd like to share Kayla Trujillo's story. Kayla has been in recovery since November of 2014 and is using her experiences to help others struggling with drug addiction. She is working to become a Certified Peer Support Worker.

But at the age of 14, Kayla was struggling. "As a young teen I had no sense of self-worth, no ability to cope with life, and sought things outside myself to help fill the empty void I felt inside," she wrote to me.

She was also a straight A, honor roll student, because she knew good grades were a ticket to a better life. But one day, she went to her mom's medicine cabinet and found a green bottle labeled Percocet for pain and took three pills.

She writes: "That day I started my thirteen year love/hate affair with opiates that would forever change my life. Once I was physically dependent on opiates I took whatever means necessary to obtain my pills."

"I resorted to faking injuries, stealing my friends' and family members' pain pills, buying pills off the street, and eventually trading sex for pills just to support my daily pain pill habit . . . One day I ran out of pills, was very ill, and there were no pills to be sold so I picked up heroin to stay well. Once introduced to heroin I knew I had to change my way of life before it was too late."

Kayla checked herself into a rehab facility and got help. But there are too many people who don't have access to the treatment they need.

I'd also like to share the story of Joshua Trujillo. Joshua is a Certified Peer Support Worker at Inside Out Recovery in Espanola, New Mexico. He entered recovery after spending 11 years on the streets using drugs and alcohol. He wrote to me to share his story, and I'd like to read from that letter:

"I was in and out of jail for various drug related crimes. I would steal and lie to everyone that came in contact with me just to support my addiction. I attempted to abstain from drugs many times through my own means and

would never succeed. In addition, I had been through drug court programs and licensed therapists and could never stay clean. I found it difficult to relate to anyone that had not experienced addiction firsthand.

"In August of 2011 I entered the doors of Inside Out Recovery where I met a Certified Peer Support Worker. Through the CPSW's own experience with addiction I came to believe that I could live my life without drugs. I had finally found someone I could relate to and learn from. Our talks were invaluable in my early recovery because I knew that if the CPSW could stay clean that I could too. The seed of recovery had been planted with that CPSW's experience and I immediately knew I wanted to dedicate the rest of my life toward staying clean and helping the addict that still suffers."

Joshua and Kayla's stories of addiction are all too common, and their stories of recovery are ones that we must ensure become more common as well.

We are taking important action on the floor today, but let's make sure that we are providing the resources necessary to address this crisis.

BARBARA SHORTER

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 16, 2016

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of a true champion of progress during Black History Month and all year long, Barbara Shorter. Her invaluable contributions to the Tampa Bay community is an inspiration to us all. Today, I am grateful to recognize her selfless dedication and honor her valuable service to our community.

Ms. Shorter grew up in St. Petersburg, graduating from Gibbs High School. She matriculated from Florida A&M University where she then began her illustrious career as an Administrative Assistant to the Dean of the School of Agriculture and Home Economics. She dedicated the next decade to teaching before continuing her own education at Florida A&M when she received her Master's in Guidance and Counseling. Soon after graduation she accepted a position as the Assistant Principal at Northeast High School, becoming the third African American teacher ever assigned to an all-white high school in Pinellas County. Returning to her own Gibbs High School as Principal, she became the first female African American High School Principal in Pinellas County in 100 years. Most recently, she was an Adjunct Instructor at the University of South Florida.

Ms. Shorter is a longtime leader in the African-American community. She was recognized as Tampa Bay's Black Most Influential in 1983 as well as Pinellas County's Educator of the Year for two straight years. Her local successes were recognized on the national level upon an invitation from Secretary of State Colin Powell to President Clinton's Summit on Education Issues from 1997–2000.

Ms. Shorter service was not limited only to her work in the educational field. Throughout her life, she displayed a passion for civic engagement. She inspired the next generation of